

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property  
Organization  
International Bureau(43) International Publication Date  
22 January 2004 (22.01.2004)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
**WO 2004/007730 A1**(51) International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>: **C12N 15/82,**  
A01H 5/00(21) International Application Number:  
PCT/EP2003/006763

(22) International Filing Date: 26 June 2003 (26.06.2003)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:  
02254986.9 16 July 2002 (16.07.2002) EP(71) Applicant (for AL, AM, AT, AZ, BA, BE, BF, BG, BJ, BR, BY, CF, CG, CH, CI, CM, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, FR, GA, GE, GN, GQ, GR, GW, HR, HU, ID, IS, IT, JP, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LR, LT, LU, LV, MA, MC, MD, MG, MK, ML, MR, MX, MZ, NE, NI, NL, NO, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SE, SI, SK, SN, TD, TG, TJ, TM, TN, TR, UA, UZ, VN, YU only): **UNILEVER N.V.** [NL/NL]; Weena 455, NL-3013 AL Rotterdam (NL).(71) Applicant (for AE, AG, AU, BB, BZ, CA, CY, GB, GD, GH, GM, IE, IL, KE, LC, LK, LS, MN, MW, NZ, OM, PG, SC, SD, SG, SL, SZ, TT, TZ, UG, VC, ZA, ZM, ZW only): **UNILEVER PLC** [GB/GB]; Unilever House, Blackfriars, London, Greater London EC4 4BQ (GB).(71) Applicant (for IN only): **HINDUSTAN LEVER LIMITED** [IN/IN]; Hindustan Lever House, 165/166 Backbay Reclamation, Maharashtra, 400 020 Mumbai (IN).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **HOLMBERG,**Niklas [SE/SE]; Alligator Bioscience AB, Scheelevaegen 19A, Delta 5, Ideon, S-230 70 Lund (SE). **SAFFORD,** Richard [GB/GB]; Unilever R & D, Colworth, Sharnbrook, Bedfordshire MK44 1LQ (GB).(74) Agent: **VELZEN VAN,** Maaike, M; Unilever N.V., Patent Department, Olivier van Noortlaan 120, NL-3133 AT Vlaarding (NL).

(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

**Published:**

- with international search report
- before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: METHOD FOR MODIFYING PLANTS

(57) Abstract: A method for increasing the level of 4-desmethyl sterols in a plant comprises increasing the enzymatic demethylation of 4-monomethyl and 4,4-dimethyl sterols. The enzymatic demethylation may be effected by the use of a gene expressing a C4 sterol methyl oxidase (C4SMO).